



Woodlot Improvement

Small Scale Solutions for your Farm in Indiana

Do You Have Problems with Unproductive/Overcrowded Woodlands?

Woodlot improvements, usually called Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) or Forest Stand Improvement (FSI) includes cutting or killing selected trees to encourage the growth of crop (remaining) trees that will be harvested.

Seeking the advice of a professional forester is highly recommended. The Indiana DNR, Div. of Forestry or consulting foresters may be available to provide assistance.



Purposes and Benefits of Small Woodlot Improvement

- Improvements are easy to conduct.
- Trees usually respond rapidly to management.
- Wood removed can be used to supplement income or can be used as a source of heat energy for the home or farm.
- Wildlife may benefit by providing more open areas and sunlight for small plants.
- Wildfire hazards are reduced.

Wood can be used as a source of firewood, fence posts, or lumber for the home or farm.



Costs and Benefits

This practice is relatively inexpensive to perform. Landowners can usually do the cutting and removal themselves or contract the services.

Costs may or may not include hauling wood which can be offset if wood is sold as firewood.

Energy needs can be supplemented by using excess wood on the farm or home.

Woodlot Improvement



The following describes the types of practices that may be needed depending on the current conditions of the woodlot and the landowner's objectives.

Thinning is needed where the stand of desirable and undesirable trees are overstocked.

The materials removed from thinning is generally too small for sawtimber, but can have value as firewood, fence posts and other specialty uses.

Cull tree removal is the practice of cutting down or killing non saleable trees, including wolf trees, deformed trees, and weed trees for the purpose of providing room for the main crop trees to increase their development in the main stand.

Intermediate cutting removes trees from a stand between establishment and the final harvest cutting. This provides space for the trees that will yield the greatest return in the future to grow faster. Start thinning at the earliest age that the cut trees will provide some profits.

Harvest cutting is made in a stand at or near the end of a selected rotation age and done in such a way as to insure regeneration of a new stand of trees.

Perform a harvest cut after the majority of the trees in the stand have reached harvest size.

Prior to harvesting, seek professional advice in order to protect the forest resource and to insure you get the true value for your trees.

Forest practices that enhance the immediate regeneration of new trees is essential for good forest management and long-term forest health and productivity.



Woodlot Improvement

Maintenance

Very little maintenance is required for this practice. A series of progressive improvements may be needed over the life of the tree stand to maintain healthy tree growth. Insects and fire should be managed to prevent destruction or loss of the desired tree species.

How To Install The Practice

Crop tree release focuses on releasing and increasing the growth rate of individual trees that have been selected to accomplish specific landowner objectives.

For all tree species, crop trees should generally meet the following selection criteria to meet the indicated objective:

Timber:

- large healthy crown in full sun
- no low forks or large branches
- high value commercial species
- select trees with an expected longevity > 20 years

Wildlife:

- large healthy crown in full sun
- favor fruit and nut trees
- cavity trees

Aesthetics:

- attractive flowers and/or foliage
- select trees with an expected longevity > 20 years
- unusual species and/or tree form visible from house, road or trail



Other Benefits from Woodlot Improvements

- provide a source of added income
- provide energy for farm or home use
- improve the health and production of the woodland
- remove undesired or dead trees
- reduce risks to fire hazard

Enhancing the forest resource can provide additional environmental benefits such as:

- carbon sequestration (capture)
- enhanced wildlife resources
- fence posts
- aesthetic and recreational benefits
- wood can be sold as firewood or utilized to provide energy for use in the home or on the farm

Technical Help Is Available

Your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office has experienced conservationists that can assist you with planning and designing a Small Woodlot Improvement. They can also help you develop a Conservation Plan to solve other concerns you have identified on your farm. ***Seeking the advice of a professional forester is also recommended.***

There is no charge for NRCS assistance (professional foresters may charge a fee for their services). Simply call your local office to set up an appointment and we will come to your farm. Requests for our assistance are numerous, but we will assist you as quickly as we can.

You may also be eligible to receive financial assistance through a state or federal program. Your NRCS office will explain any programs that are available so you can make the best decision for your operation. All NRCS programs and services are voluntary.



Helping People—Help the Land

For more information contact the:

Natural Resources Conservation Service at the USDA Service Center for your county

On the web at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>

Or

Located in the phone book under 'United States Government, United States Department of Agriculture, USDA Service Centers'

Or the

Local Soil & Water Conservation District

(Typically co-located in the local USDA Service Center)

Office hours: M-F, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm (closed on federal holidays)

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.